

In the Claims:

Please enter the following amended claims 33, 45, 51, and 69:

33. (Twice Amended) A composite structure in an IC chip, said composite structure comprising:

C1 a first metal pad structure comprising a first interconnect metal;

a first via pad structure below said first metal pad structure, said first via pad structure comprising a plurality of segments of a first via metal and a first plurality of dielectric fillers, at least one of said plurality of segments of said first via metal contacting said first interconnect metal, at least two of said plurality of segments of said first via metal being connected.

C2 45. (Twice Amended) A method for fabricating a composite structure in an IC chip, said method comprising steps of:

fabricating a first via pad structure, said first via pad structure comprising a plurality of segments of a first via metal and a first plurality of dielectric fillers, at least two of said plurality of segments of said first via metal being connected;

fabricating a first metal pad structure above said first via pad structure, said first metal pad structure comprising a first interconnect metal, said first interconnect metal contacting at least one of said plurality of segments of said first via metal.

51. (Twice Amended) A composite structure in an IC chip, said composite

structure comprising:

a first via pad structure comprising a first via metal;

a first metal pad structure below ^{and connected to} said first via pad structure, said first metal pad

structure comprising a plurality of segments of a first interconnect metal and a first

plurality of dielectric fillers, at least one of said plurality of segments of said first

interconnect metal contacting said first via metal, at least two of said plurality of

segments of said first interconnect metal being connected.

69. (Once Amended) A composite structure comprising:

a first via pad structure comprising a first via metal;

a first metal pad structure below ^{and connected} said first via pad structure, said first metal pad

structure comprising a plurality of ^{alternating segments} segments of a first interconnect metal and a first ^{each alternating w/} adjacent alternating

plurality of dielectric fillers, at least one of said plurality of segments of said first

interconnect metal contacting said first via metal;

a second via pad structure below said first metal pad structure, said second via pad

structure comprising a plurality of segments of a second via metal and a second plurality

of dielectric fillers, at least one of said plurality of segments of said second via metal

contacting said first interconnect metal, at least two of said plurality of segments of said

second via metal being connected.